

# Senior Duxbury resident wins gold medals in World Masters

SPECIAL TO THE CLIPPER

**M**arj Burgard, an 81-year-old Village at Duxbury resident and Cohasset native, recently brought home four first-place medals from the World Rowing Championships in St. Catharine's, Ontario. She also placed fourth in a doubles race, partnering with her son Dick Burbridge of Hingham.

More than 3,000 rowers from 33 countries competed in the World Masters Regatta sponsored by The Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d'Aviron, or FISA for short.

A lifelong sailor, Burgard began to row recreational shells in the 1960s, after her late husband Arthur Martin, a naval architect, developed the famous Alden Ocean Shell. Wider and more stable than a racing shell, this boat that she helped pioneer — and continues to champion — has introduced many people to the sport of recreational rowing.

Decades later, after her husband had passed away, Burgard decided to master the single racing shell when



Marj Burgard with her medals from the World Rowing Championship.

she was 65 years old. By this time, she had married another rower, Ralph Burgard. She became a certified rowing coach, and won when she raced for the first time in the Head of the Charles in 1999, at the age of 75. She rowed for three more years in the Head of the Charles before testing her skills against other rowers from around the world in the 2001 FISA World Masters Regatta. That year, she won five gold medals, including the mixed doubles race with her

husband.

During the final ceremony of this year's World Masters Regatta, Burgard was the only woman to be inducted into the Ancient Order of the Oars, an honor bestowed upon rowers older than 80 who have competed in at least one world's race. She shared the podium with men from Japan, Germany, Switzerland and the USA.

"The adrenaline rush that comes from pushing oneself to the limit, so all those endorphins are bursting within you — there just isn't any feeling like it," said Burgard. "I row because I can't help it."